

A Leafy Form of *Hypericum gentianoides*

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One of the most abundant plants in sterile rocky or sandy places from Maine to Texas, is the little branched annual known as "orange grass" or "pine weed." The leaves are reduced to minute scales usually only 1 mm. long, though occasionally on elongate shoots they may reach 2 or 3 mm. It was, accordingly, a great surprise to find among the hundreds of plants which grew on the sandy borders of the Merrick Reservoir (Nassau County, Long Island) a single plant with well-developed leafy shoots, illustrated in the accompanying photograph. The flowering stalks of the little plant are only 5 cm. high, about the same size as the leafy shoots which radiated out on the sand to form a rosette. The lanceolate spiny-tipped leaves are mostly 4-5 mm. long, appressed to the stem, and considerably broader than in *Hypericum Drummondii* of the Mississippi Valley, which is sometimes united with *Hypericum gentianoides* to form the genus *Sarothra*. This was an old genus established by Linnaeus, with the help of his student Chenon, when the affinities of the plant were obscure and *Hypericum gentianoides* was supposed to be a member of the gentian family. It does resemble *Bartonia*, and by Plukenet and other early writers it had been considered as a kind of "Centaurium," a name later taken up by Persoon for *Bartonia*. Clayton noted that the plant was called "ground pine" in Virginia, but that name is now commonly applied to species of *Lycopodium*. Mr. Weatherby had the kindness to look at the specimen which is illustrated here and he also pronounced it to be *Hypericum gentianoides*. I have known the "orange grass" since I was a small child, but have never seen any other specimen of a leafy plant. The specimen (Svenson no. 11,658, Sept. 15, 1941) is at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

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HYPERICUM GENTIANOIDES

(Photographed by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden)